2015 Hurricane Guide for Southeast South Carolina/Georgia Plan, Act, Survive!





National Weather Service Charleston, SC weather.gov/chs

Welcome to the 2015 Hurricane Guide from your National Weather Service in Charleston, SC!

This guide will help you:

- > prepare for hurricane season
- > stay informed of the latest tropical cyclone threats
- > stay safe during a hurricane
- > learn about local tropical cyclone history

Outline

- >Tropical Cyclone Hazards
 - > Being Prepared and Staying Informed
 - > Tropical Cyclone Basics
 - > Tropical Cyclone Climatology
 - > Tropical Cyclone History for Southeast South Carolina and Southeast Georgia

Main Tropical Cyclone Hazards



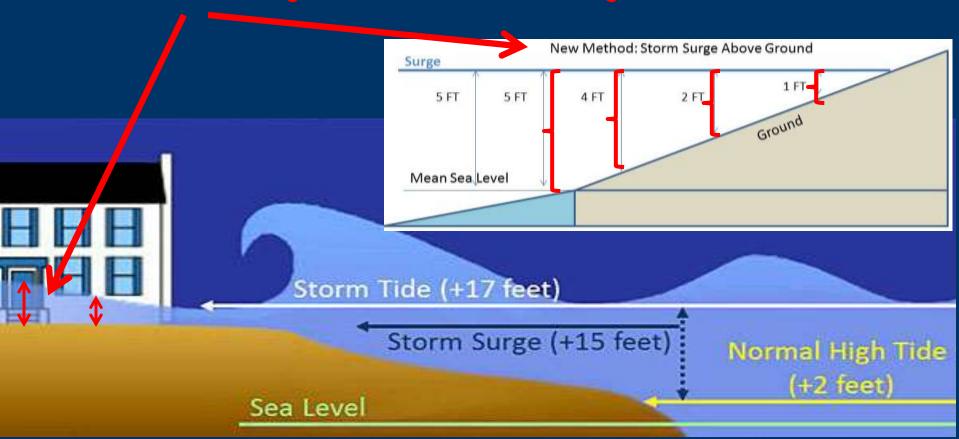






Storm Surge Terminology

- > Storm surge: abnormal rise of water generated by a storm
- > Storm tide: storm surge + astronomical tide
- > Inundation: height of water above the ground

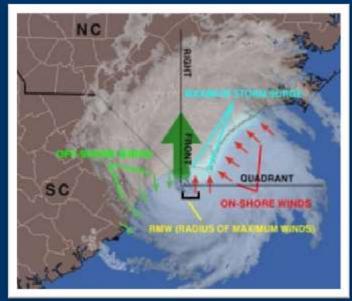


Storm Surge Facts

- Greatest threat to life and property along the coast
- Can occur rapidly and forcefully and travel many miles inland in low-lying areas (such as along the SC/GA coasts)
- Produced mainly by strong winds blowing over the ocean for an extended period
- Generally, stronger/larger/slower storms produce higher surge
- The amount of surge is not always the same for each category of storm
- Highest surges at the coast typically occur to the right of where the center of the storm comes ashore (blue area outlined in the image to the right)



Isle of Palms, SC after Hurricane Hugo (1989)



Storm Surge Facts

- > The timing of the surge is critical since there will be more inundation around high astronomical tide compared to low tide
- The coastal areas of SC/GA are the 3rd most surge-prone area in the U.S. given the low land elevations and gently sloping continental shelf offshore
- In 1989, Hurricane Hugo produced the highest water levels ever recorded on the U.S. East Coast (~20 foot storm tide above Mean Sea Level at Bulls Bay, SC and ~10 foot storm tide in downtown Charleston, SC)

< Images courtesy of NWS



Romain Retreat, SC (near Bulls Bay) after Hugo



The Battery in Downtown Charleston, SC after Hugo

Storm Surge Impacts







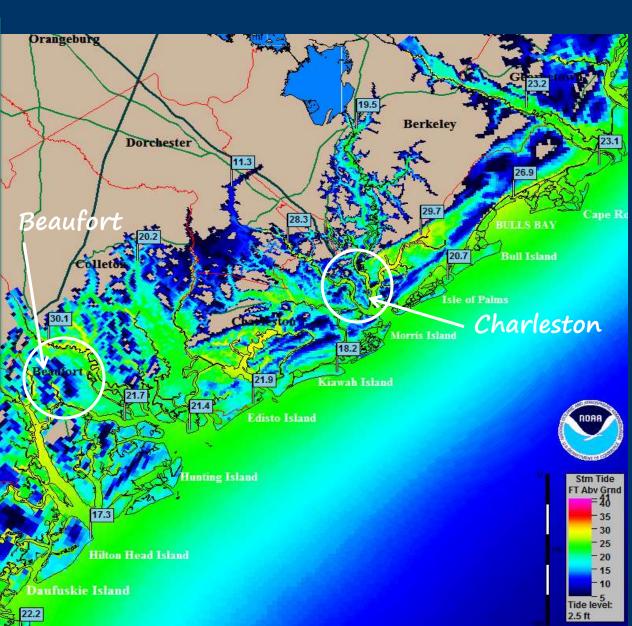
- Category 3; 10-16 foot surge



Local Storm Surge Risk

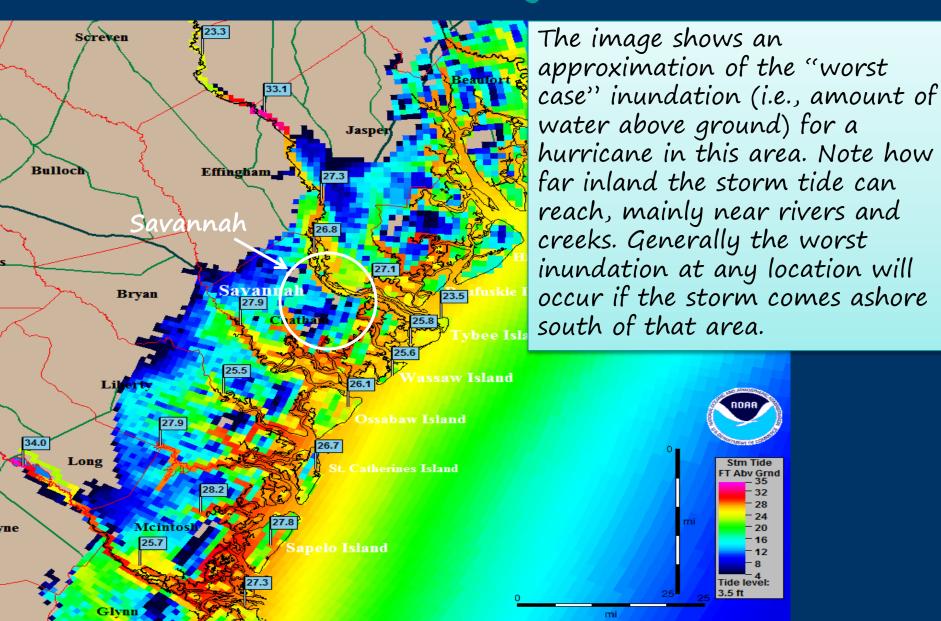
Southern South Carolina Coast

The image shows an approximation of the "worst case" inundation (i.e., amount of water above ground) for a hurricane in this area. Note how far inland the storm tide can reach...mainly along lowlying rivers and creeks. Generally the worst inundation at any location will occur if the storm comes ashore south of that area.



Local Storm Surge Risk

Northern Georgia Coast





Are You At Risk From Storm Surge?

- Determine your elevation and whether you live in a flood zone (i.e., if you are vulnerable to storm surge flooding)
 - If you live in/near any of the shaded areas on the maps on the previous 2 slides you are vulnerable to storm surge!
 - Refer to your county emergency management office... SC / GA
 - Check out NOAA's storm surge risk maps
- Learn which pre-designated evacuation zone you live in as well as official evacuation routes... <u>SC</u> / <u>GA</u>
- Evacuate if advised to do so by local authorities!
- Keep in mind that if you don't evacuate, your location may become an "island" cut off from emergency officials

High Winds

- Strong, damaging winds can occur well inland away from coastal areas
- In fact, Hurricane Hugo in 1989 produced hurricane force wind gusts in Charlotte, NC toppling numerous trees and power lines (see images below)





High Wind Facts

- Generally the stronger the storm at landfall the longer it will take for the winds to diminish
- Coastal areas/high-rise buildings:
 - > winds normally higher due to less surface friction
- > Inland areas away from the immediate coast:
 - sustained winds generally lower than at coast, but gusts can be similar to sustained winds at coast



High Wind Safety

- Cover all windows and doors with plywood or shutters
 - > Do NOT leave any windows/doors open to relieve pressure
 - > Tape does NOT work!
- > Reinforce garage doors as they are typically weak points
- > Store all outdoor items that could become deadly missiles
- Evacuate to a more sturdy structure if you live in a mobile/manufactured home, especially if advised to do so by local authorities
- During a storm, go to your "safe place" which should be the most interior room on the lowest floor of your building that is not prone to flooding and protect your head with helmets or pillows



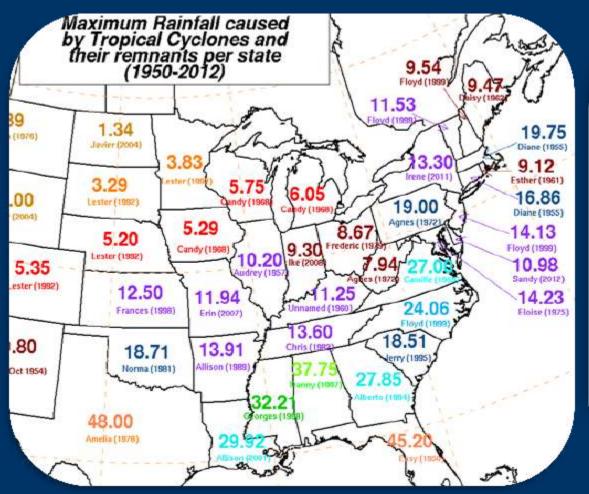


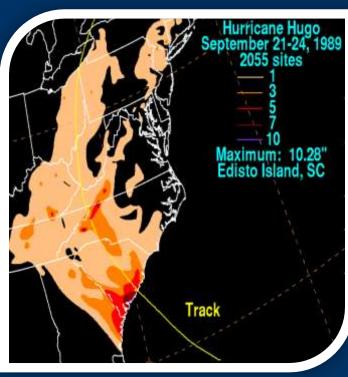
Heavy Rainfall/Flooding

- > When you think "hurricane", think "flooding"!
- Most deaths in tropical cyclones recently have been from inland/fresh water flooding
- Weak storms can still produce heavy rainfall
- > Slower storms can produce more rainfall
- Determine whether you live in a flood zone and evacuate if advised to do so by local officials
- Never drive through flooded roads since you don't know how deep the water is and the road may be washed out

Remember, it only takes ~1 foot of water to move most small vehicles!!

Heavy Rainfall/Flooding





Images courtesy of NWS/Weather Prediction Center

> The coastal areas of SC and GA, particularly in urban areas like downtown Charleston and Savannah, are particularly vulnerable to flooding given the added influence of the storm tides

Tornadoes/Waterspouts

- Typically short-lived (minutes) and weak (EFO-EF1: up to 110 mph), although can be much stronger
- Typically occur within the storm's outer rain bands and near the center (eye wall)
- During the storm, if the NWS issues a "Tornado Warning" or "Extreme Wind Warning" for your location, go to your "safe place" (i.e., most interior room on lowest floor not prone to flooding)





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Before the Storm...



- Determine your elevation and whether you live in a flood zone (i.e., if you are vulnerable to flooding from storm surge)
 - If you live in/near any of the shaded areas on the surge maps found earlier in this guide you are vulnerable to storm surge!
 - Refer to your county emergency management office... SC / GA
- Learn which pre-designated evacuation zone you live in... SC / GA
- > If you are evacuating, find a hotel/shelter and learn evacuation routes
- Get a disaster supply kit that includes sufficient food and water
- Prepare your home by boarding up windows/doors with plywood and trimming trees and shrubbery
- Review your insurance policy (Note: flooding is not covered and must be purchased via the <u>National Flood Insurance Program</u> for which there is roughly a 30 day waiting period)
- Make plans for your pets since some shelters/hotels do not accept them

Remember...preparation is key!

If evacuating...leave early!!



Motorists Trapped on 1-26 During Hurricane Floyd (1999)

An average size car will flip in 115 mph winds!

Tropical Storm/Hurricane Watch & Warning Definitions

><u>Watch</u>:

- Tropical Storm/Hurricane force winds possible within 48 hours
- > Get Prepared!

><u>Warning</u>:

- Tropical Storm/Hurricane force winds likely within 36 hours
- > Take Action!

If a Watch is Issued For Your Area...

- Determine if you are vulnerable to storm surge flooding... SC / GA
- Learn your pre-designated evacuation zone as well as official evacuation routes... <u>SC</u> / <u>GA</u>
- Evacuate if you are advised to do so by officials, and do so early!
- Review your <u>disaster plan</u> and check your <u>supply kit</u>
- Prepare your home by trimming weak/dead branches, covering windows/doors and bringing in unsecured outdoor items
- Inspect/secure mobile home tie downs
- If evacuating, notify your friends/family and note that some shelters/hotels do not accept pets
- Gas your vehicles and get cash since ATMs won't work w/o power
- Store drinking water in jugs, bottles and clean bathtubs (at least 1 gallon per person per day for 3 days)

If a Warning is Issued For Your Area...

- > Rush protective actions to completion!!
- Evacuate as soon as possible, especially if advised to do so by authorities!
 - > Notify friends/family of where you are going
 - > Take your disaster supply kit with you
 - > Unplug appliances and turn off electricity/main water valve
- > If not evacuating...
 - Be sure you are not vulnerable to flooding... SC / GA
 - > Ready your disaster supply kit
 - Turn your refrigerator/freezer to their coldest settings and keep closed as much as possible
 - > Cover windows/doors and store outdoor items
 - Fill bathtubs and large containers with water for cleaning/flushing purposes in case clean tap water is unavailable
 - If power is lost, turn off major appliances to reduce power "surge" when electricity is restored

After the Storm...

- If you have evacuated, don't return home until notified by officials!
- Watch for downed trees/power lines, glass, nails, and other debris as well as snakes, insects and other animals
- Don't drive through flooded roads
- > Don't run power generators indoors
- > Help neighbors, especially the elderly
- Be patient as help may take several days!
- More recovery tips....
 http://www.ready.gov/recovering-disaster





Images courtesy of US DOT/FHA

Staying Informed: Real-time Storm Information

- > Social Media:
 - NWS Charleston Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/NWSCharlestonSC
 - > NWS Charleston Twitter: <a>@NWSCharlestonSC
- > Mobile:
 - > hurricanes.gov/mobile
- > Internet:
 - > NWS Charleston, SC: weather.gov/chs
 - > National Hurricane Center: <u>hurricanes.gov</u>
- > NOAA Weather Radio:
 - http://weather.gov/nwr
- > Local TV/Radio



NWS Tropical Products/Services

National Hurricane Center

Forecasts development, track, and strength of tropical cyclones

NWS Charleston, SC

Localizes the potential tropical cyclone impacts for Southeast SC/GA



<u>hurricanes.gov</u>



weather.gov/chs

NHC Tropical Weather Outlook

http://hurricanes.gov/gtwo_atl.shtml



NHC Track Forecast "Cone of Uncertainty"

- Shows the <u>likely</u>
 storm track along
 with the latest
 tropical
 storm/hurricane
 watches and warnings
- It is important to remember that the "cone" does NOT indicate the area of possible impact, rather just the likely track of the storm center!
 - For example, if the storm tracks on the edges of the "cone" there would be impacts outside of the "cone"!



NHC Wind Speed Probabilities

- Shows the chance of 34 knot (tropical storm force), 50 knot, and 64 knot (hurricane force) winds through the next 5 days, as well as during particular time periods
- Accounts for uncertainty in the storm's track/size/intensity
- NOTE: Low probabilities do NOT necessarily imply low risk!
- Product description:
 - http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/ aboutnhcgraphics.shtml#W INDPROB



The graphic above shows the probabilities of tropical storm force winds during the next 5 days

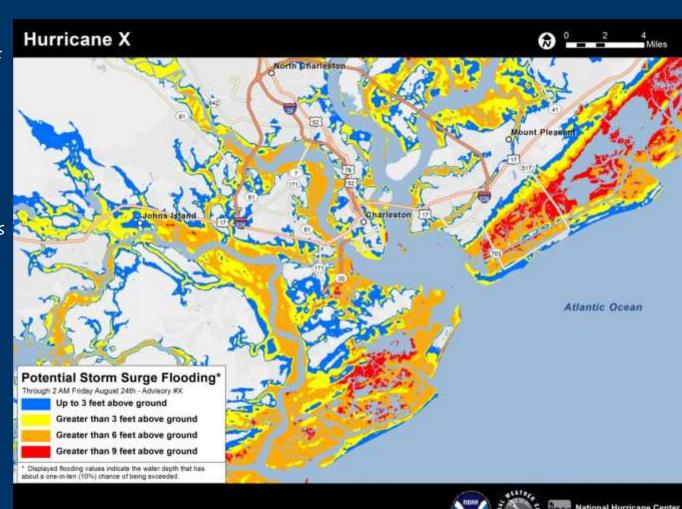
NHC Wind Speed Probabilities Example

Forecast Ho	ur	12	24	36	48	72	96	120
CHARLOTTE NC	34	X	X (X)	X (X)	X (X)	1(1)	3 (4)	3 (7)
MOREHEAD CITY MOREHEAD CITY MOREHEAD CITY	34 50 64	X X X	X (X) X (X) X (X)	4 (4) X (X) X (X)	6(10) X(X) X(X)	13(23) 4(4) 1(1)	4 (27) 2 (6) 1 (2)	2 (29) X (6) X (2)
WILMINGTON NC WILMINGTON NC WILMINGTON NC	34 50 64	X X X	X (X) X (X) X (X)	4 (4) X (X) X (X)	4(8) X(X) X(X)	6(14) 1(1) X(X)	4(18) 1(2) 1(1)	1(19) 1(3) X(1)
COLUMBIA SC	34	X	X (X)	1(1)	X(1)	X(1)	2 (3)	2 (5)
MYRTLE BEACH	34	Х	1(1)	3 (4)	2 (6)	4(10)	2 (12)	1(13)
CHARLESTON SC	34	Х	2(2)	3 (5)	X(5)	1(6)	1(7)	1(8)
SAVANNAH GA	34	X	2 (2)	2 (4)	X(4)	X(4)	X(4)	1(5)

The probability for tropical storm force winds (34 kt) at Savannah, Georgia in the 12-24 hour time period is 2%, the cumulative probability through 48 hours is 4% and the cumulative probability for the entire 5-day period (120 hours) is 5%.

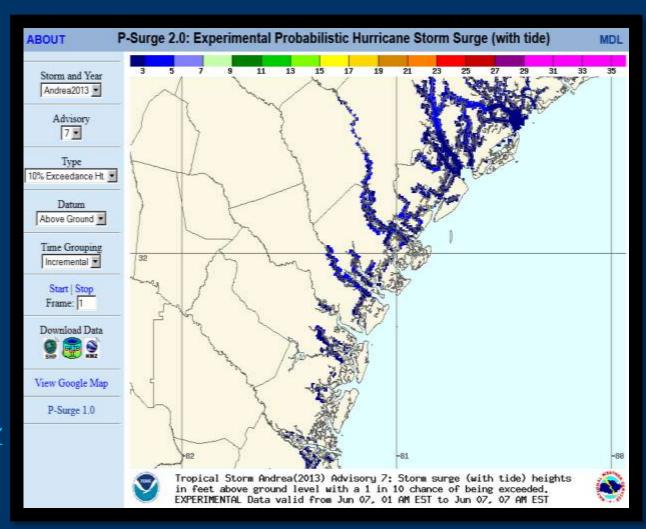
Storm Surge Inundation Map

- Shows potential water heights above ground that could result from a storm's surge combined with the tide (i.e., storm tide)
- Will be available on the NHC website soon after the 1st Hurricane Watch is issued for a storm and updated with each subsequent advisory
- Represents a plausible worst-case scenario and thus what people should prepare for
- http://www.nhc.noaa.gov /news/20140131 pa sto rmSurgeGraphic.pdf



Storm Surge Probabilities

- Shows the potential for inundation (i.e., water height above ground) resulting from a hurricane's storm surge as well as the tide
- Accounts for uncertainty in a storm's track/intensity/size
- The data is available as probabilities of particular storm tide heights as well as % exceedence heights
- http://www.nws.noaa.gov/ mdl/psurge2.0/



> The image above indicates the storm tide heights which have just a 10% chance of being exceeded

NWS Charleston Products Hurricane Local Statement (HLS)

URGENT - IMMEDIATE BROADCAST REQUESTED TROPICAL STORM ANDREA LOCAL STATEMENT NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE CHARLESTON SC 316 PM EDT FRI JUN 7 2013

...TROPICAL STORM WARNING CANCELLED FOR THE CHARLESTON COUNTY COASTAL WATERS...

.NEW INFORMATION...

WARNINGS HAVE BEEN DISCONTINUED.

.AREAS AFFECTED...

THIS LOCAL STATEMENT OFFERS GUIDANCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MARINERS...AS WELL AS OTHER MARINE INTERESTS...ALONG ALL COASTAL WATER LEGS OF SOUTHEAST SOUTH CAROLINA.

.WATCHES/WARNINGS...

TROPICAL CYCLONE WATCHES AND WARNINGS ARE NO LONGER IN EFFECT ANYWHERE ACROSS SOUTHEAST SOUTH CAROLINA AND SOUTHEAST GEORGIA.

PLEASE CHECK THE LATEST PUBLIC AND MARINE FORECASTS FOR DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT ADDITIONAL HAZARDS.

.STORM INFORMATION...

AT 3 PM EDT...THE CENTER OF TROPICAL STORM ANDREA WAS LOCATED NEAR LATITUDE 34.9N...LONGITUDE 78.9W. THIS WAS ABOUT 160 MILES NORTH-NORTHEAST OF CHARLESTON SC. STORM MOTION WAS NORTHEAST AT 28 MPH. STORM INTENSITY WAS 45 MPH.

.SITUATION OVERVIEW...

CONDITIONS WILL CONTINUE TO IMPROVE ACROSS THE WATERS TONIGHT AS TROPICAL STORM ANDREA MOVES FARTHER AWAY FROM THE REGION.

.PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...
PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

MARINERS SHOULD CHECK THE LATEST COASTAL WATERS FORECAST BEFORE MAKING ANY DEFINITE PLANS.

&&

.NEXT UPDATE...

AS IT PERTAINS TO THIS EVENT...THIS WILL BE THE LAST LOCAL STATEMENT ISSUED BY THE NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE IN CHARLESTON REGARDING THE EFFECTS OF TROPICAL CYCLONE HAZARDS UPON THE AREA.

Describes potential impacts from the storm as well as appropriate precautionary /preparedness actions that should be taken

Portion of the final HLS issued for Tropical Storm Andrea in June
 2013

NWS Charleston Products

Hurricane Threats and Impacts Graphics

- Shows the <u>potential</u> impacts from wind, storm surge, rainfall and tornadoes
- Provides recommended protective actions

» High Wind graphic issued for Tropical Storm Andrea in June 2013



NWS Charleston Products <u>Post-storm Report (PSH)</u>

POST TROPICAL CYCLONE REPORT...TROPICAL STORM ANDREA...UPDATED NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE CHARLESTON SC 1009 AM EDT FRI JUN 14 2013

NOTE: THE DATA SHOWN HERE ARE PRELIMINARY....AND SUBJECT TO UPDATES AND CORRECTIONS AS APPROPRIATE.

THIS REPORT INCLUDES EVENTS OCCURRING WHEN WATCHES AND/OR WARNINGS WERE IN EFFECT...OR WHEN SIGNIFICANT FLOODING ASSOCIATED WITH ANDREA OR ITS REMNANTS WAS AFFECTING THE AREA.

COUNTIES INCLUDED...CHARLESTON...BERKELEY...COLLETON...BEAUFORT...
BRYAN...LIBERTY...MCINTOSH...JASPER

JUN 14...UPDATED FOR...STORM SURGE/TIDE AND INLAND FLOODING.

A. LOWEST SEA LEVEL PRESSURE/MAXIMUM SUSTAINED WINDS AND PEAK GUSTS

......

METAR OBSERVATIONS...

NOTE: ANEMOMETER HEIGHT IS 10 METERS AND WIND AVERAGING IS 2 MINUTES

LOCATION ID MIN DATE/ MAX DATE/ PEAK DATE/ LAT LON PRES TIME SUST TIME GUST TIME DEG DECIMAL (MB) (UTC) (KT) (UTC) (KT) (UTC)

KCHS-CHARLESTON INTL AIRPORT SC 32.91 -80.03 999.4 07/0956 180/024 07/0956 180/034 07/0943

KSAV-SAVANNAH INTL AIRPORT GA 32.12 -80.20 997.7 07/0753 270/016 07/1346 270/024 07/1346

KNBC-BEAUFORT MARINE CORPS AIR STATION SC 32.48 -80.72 997.2 07/0856 250/016 07/1137 290/025 07/1608

Summarizes the local impacts from the storm

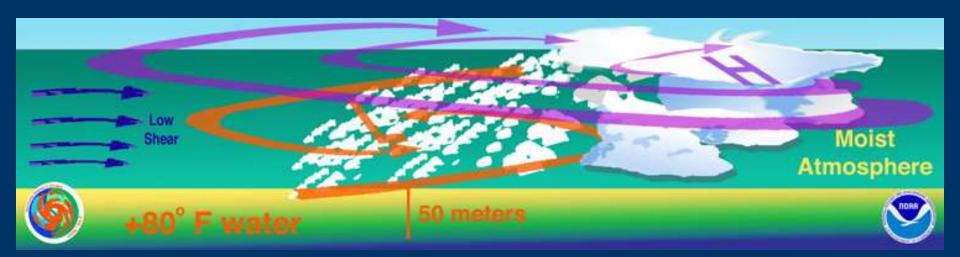
Portion of the PSH issued for Tropical
 Storm Andrea in June
 2013

Outline

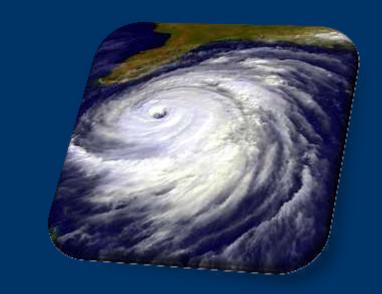
- > Tropical Cyclone Hazards
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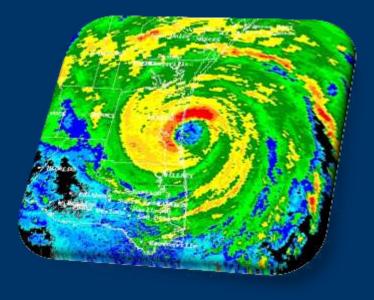
Tropical Cyclone Basics

- Tropical Cyclone: rotating system of showers and thunderstorms originating over tropical or subtropical waters and having a closed low-level circulation (i.e., at least one isobar around the center)
- Ingredients needed for development:
 - Ocean water temperatures 80 degrees Fahrenheit or greater
 - Low amounts of vertical wind shear (i.e., winds of different strengths/directions at different heights)
 - Moist and unstable (i.e., air prone to rising) atmosphere
 - Pre-existing near-surface low pressure with sufficient spin



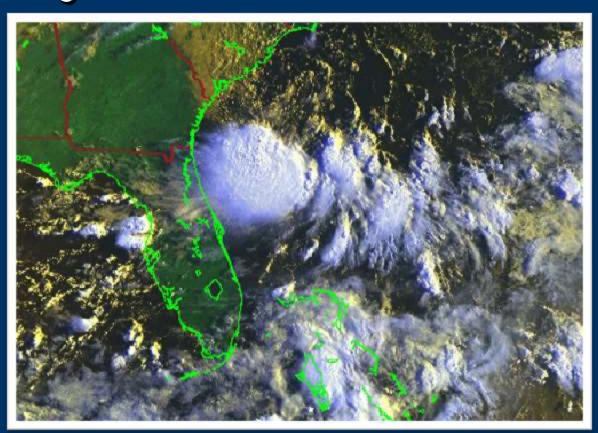
- Tropical
 Disturbance
- Tropical
 Depression
- > Tropical Storm
- > Hurricane
- Post-tropical Cyclone: A former tropical cyclone which no longer possesses sufficient tropical characteristics but can still produce strong winds and heavy rain





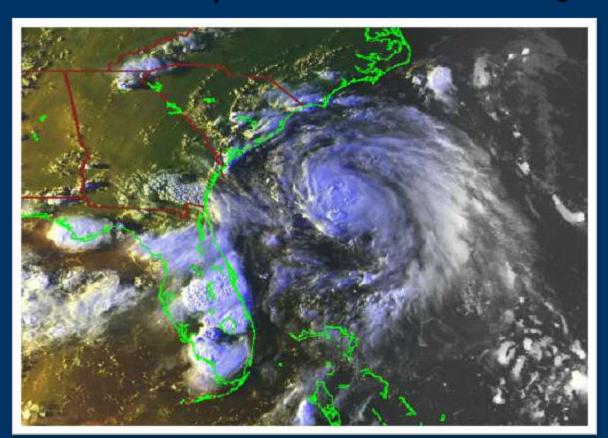
Tropical Disturbance

- > No organized surface circulation
- > Disorganized cluster of thunderstorms



Tropical Depression

- > Sustained winds less than 39 mph
- Surface low pressure better organized



Tropical Storm

- > Sustained winds of 39-73 mph
- > Storm gets a name at this stage



Hurricane

- > Sustained winds 74 mph or greater
- > Storm typically forms an "eye" at this stage



Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale

- Category 1:
 - > 74-95 mph winds
 - > Minimal damage
- Category 2:
 - > 96-110 mph winds
 - Moderate damage
- Category 3:
 - > 111-129 mph winds
 - Major damage
- Category 4:
 - > 130-156 mph winds
 - > Extreme damage
- Category 5:
 - > 157+ mph winds
 - > Catastrophic damage

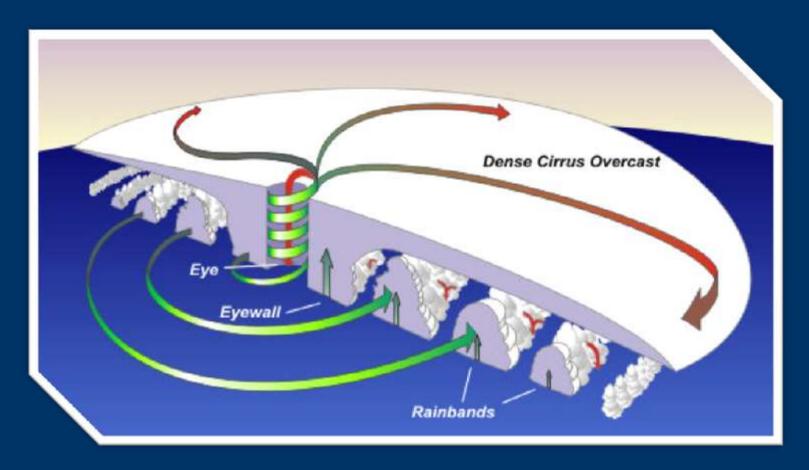
http://hurricanes.gov/aboutsshws.php



Major hurricanes (Cat 3-5) produce 85% of all hurricane damage!

Note: This scale should <u>NOT</u> be used to determine the amount of storm surge a hurricane can produce!!

Hurricane Structure



- > The eye wall surrounds the calm eye and typically contains the strongest winds
- The outer rainbands contain gusty winds, heavy rain and some tornadoes

Aircraft - "Hurricane Hunters"

- > NOAA P-3/Air Force Reserve WC-130
 - Samples storm environment between 500 10,000 feet
- > NOAA Gulf Stream IV
 - > Samples a large area around storm ~45,000 feet high

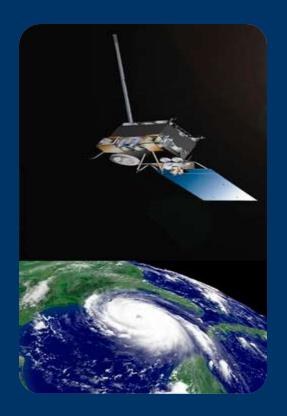


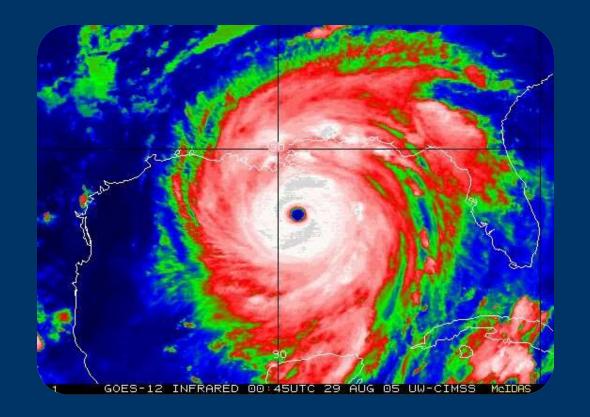




Satellites

- > Global Network of Geostationary and Polar Orbiters
 - Very important in hurricane analysis, tracking and forecasting

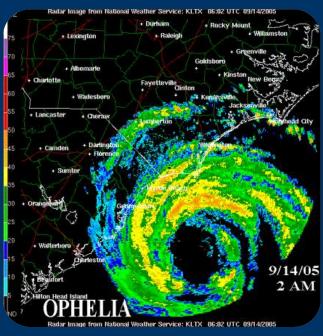


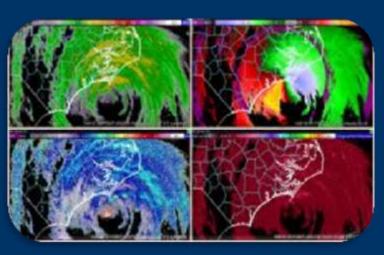


NWS Doppler Radars

> Help detect storm center, max winds, and tornadoes







Buoys, Ships, & Land-based Observations



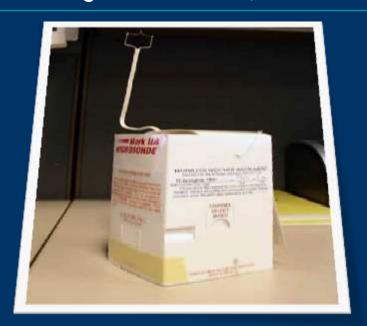




Weather Balloons/Radiosondes

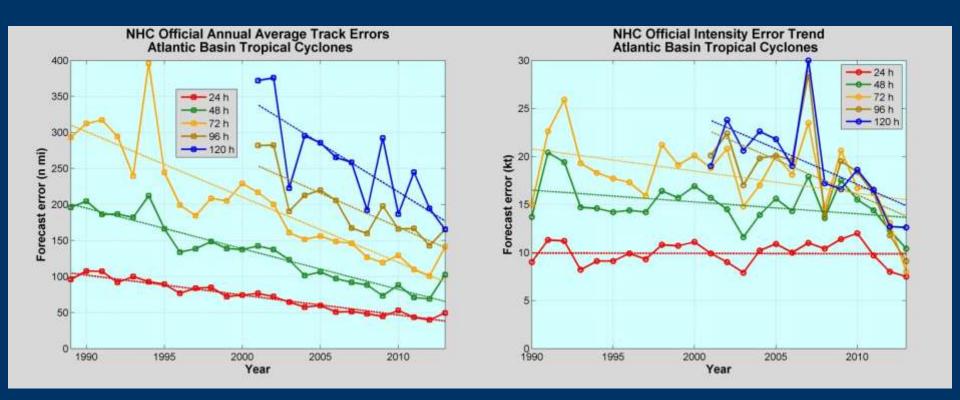
- Released all over the world at the same time to sample the atmosphere and initialize weather forecast models
- > Reach over 100,000 feet (19 miles) high
- NWS Charleston launches these balloons 2 times per day (up to 4 times per day before/during hurricanes)





Forecast Models (Dynamical and Statistical)

- > Used to forecast a tropical cyclone's track & strength
- As shown below, the National Hurricane Center track forecasts (left) are steadily improving, although there has been little to no improvement in intensity forecasts (right)



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Atlantic Basin Hurricane Season

June 1 – November 30

- Atlantic basin includes most of northwest Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea and Gulf of Mexico
- The peak of the season is around September 10
- However, tropical cyclones can occur before June and after November if the conditions are right

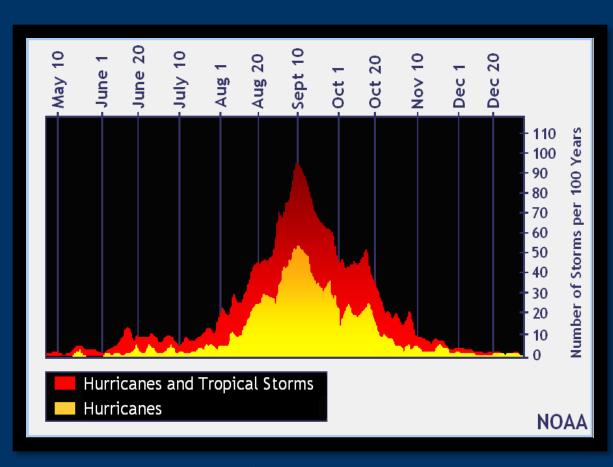
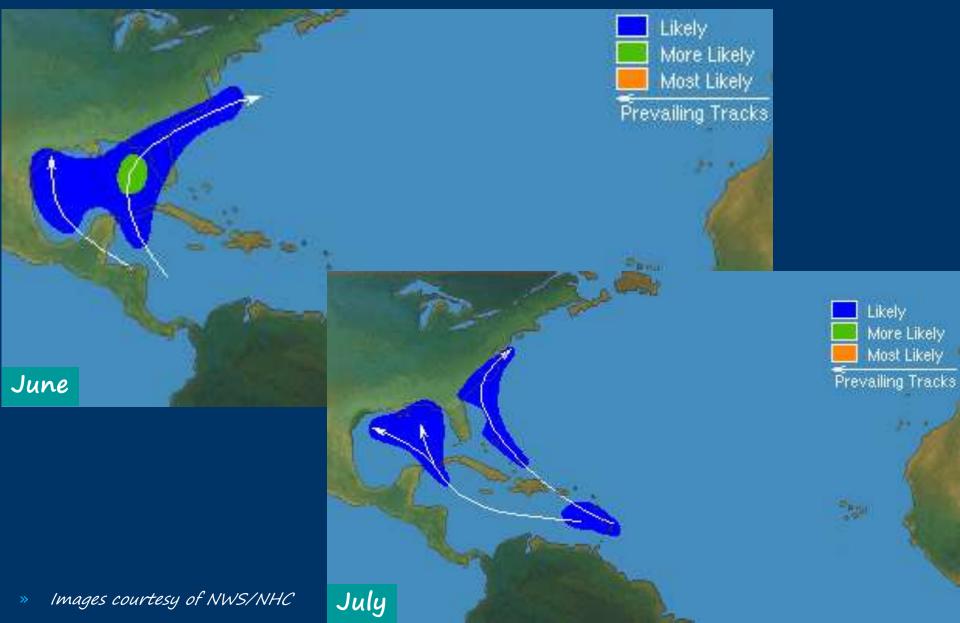
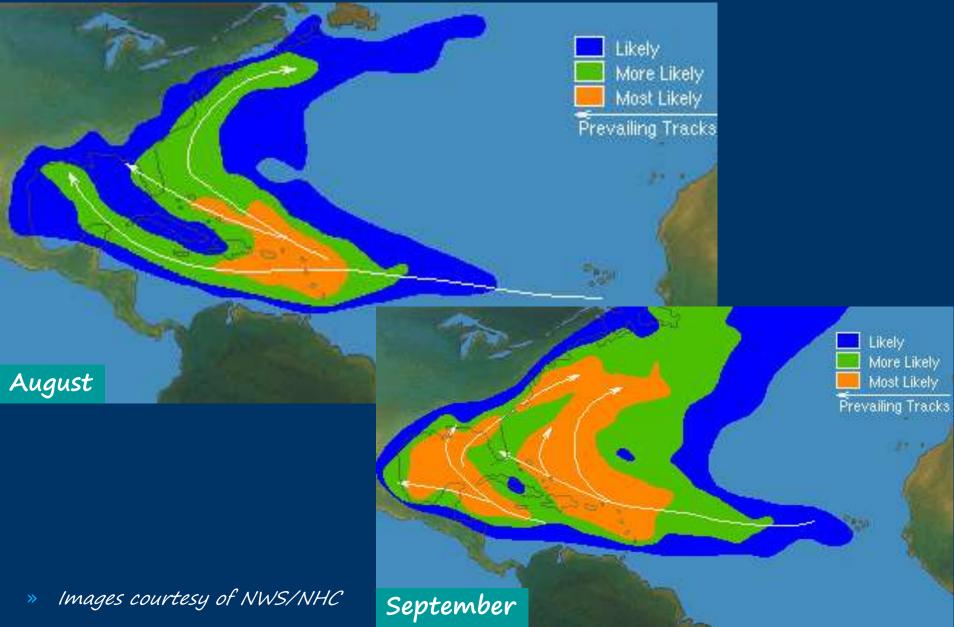


Image courtesy of NWS/National Hurricane Center

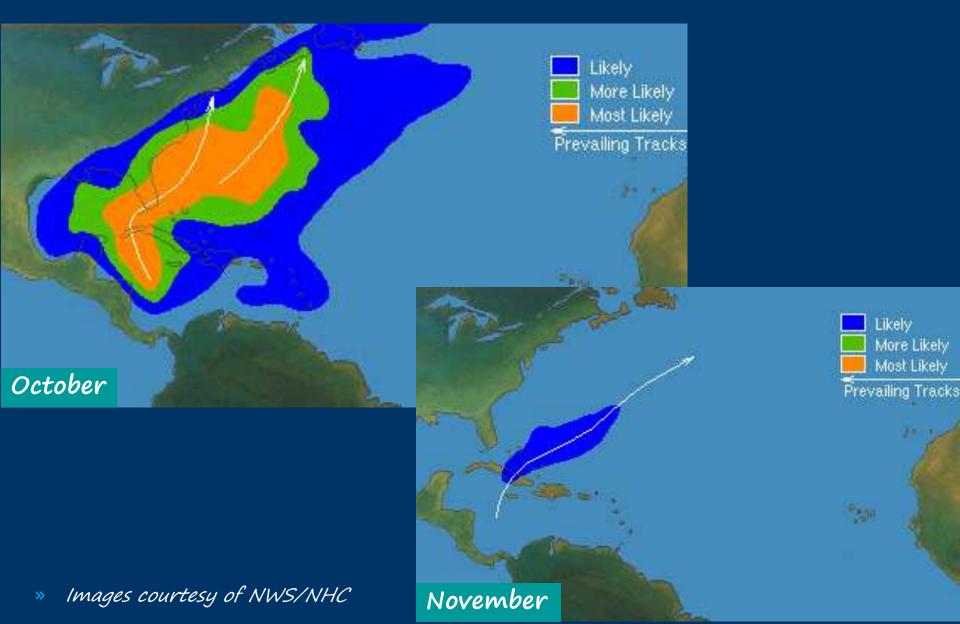
Typical Hurricane Formation Areas/Tracks



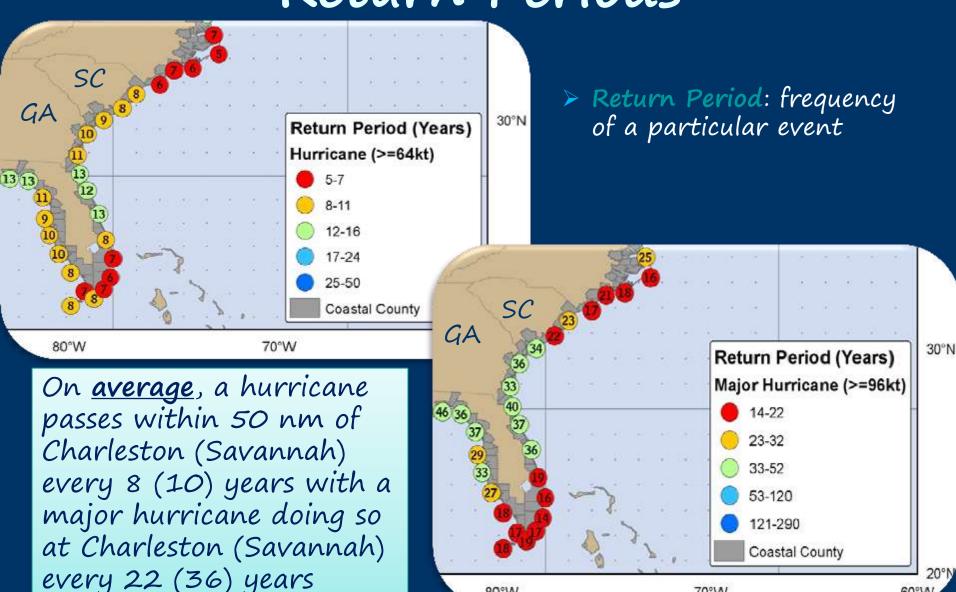
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Typical Hurricane Formation Areas/Tracks



Southeast U.S. Hurricane Return Periods



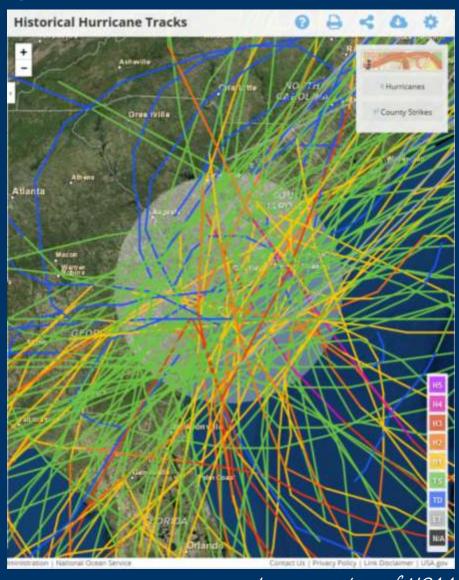
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Local Tropical Cyclone History

http://weather.gov/chs/TChistory

- Since 1851 (when official records began), ~100 tropical storms and hurricanes have passed within 100 miles of Beaufort, SC (see image to the right)
- During the same time, 46 tropical cyclones made landfall in South Carolina and Georgia
 - 5 Tropical Depressions
 - > 13 Tropical Storms
 - 28 Hurricanes (including 7 Major Hurricanes)



Local Tropical Cyclone History

http://weather.gov/chs/TChistory

- Since 1851, 5 "Major" hurricanes (Cat 3-5) have made landfall in Southeast SC/North Coastal GA
 - > Unnamed Sep 1854
 - "Great Sea Islands Hurricane" Aug 1893
 - > Unnamed Oct 1893
 - Gracie Sep 1959
 - Hugo Sep 1989

» Images courtesy of NOAA



Important Links



- > Hurricane Safety/Preparedness
 - National Weather Service:
 - > http://weather.gov/om/hurricane/index.shtml
 - NWS National Hurricane Center:
 - > http://hurricanes.gov/prepare
 - Federal Emergency Management Agency:
 - > http://www.ready.gov/hurricanes
 - South Carolina Emergency Management (includes evacuation zone/route info): http://www.scemd.org/
 - Georgia Emergency Management (includes evacuation zone/route info): http://www.gema.ga.gov/
- > Tropical Cyclone Forecasts
 - > NHC: http://hurricanes.gov
 - > NWS Charleston, SC: http://weather.gov/chs/tropical

Important Links



- > Storm Surge
 - http://hurricanes.gov/surge
 - Risk Maps
- Local Tropical Cyclone History
 - http://weather.gov/chs/TChistory
- Tropical Cyclone Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)
 - http://www.aoml.noaa.gov/hrd/tcfaq/tcfaqHED.html
- NOAA Education Resources Hurricanes
 - http://www.education.noaa.gov/Weather_and_Atmosphere/H urricanes.html
- > Tropical Cyclone Names
 - http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/aboutnames.shtml

We Wish You a Safe Hurricane Season!









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